

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Canceled) A method for maintaining an association between a receiver unit and a plurality of geographic areas served by the receiver unit, comprising:
 - at installation of the receiver unit, determining the geographic areas served by the receiver unit;
 - providing a database entry that associates the geographic areas served by the receiver unit with a unique ID that identifies the receiver unit; and
 - subsequent to installation, updating the database by:
 - providing the unique ID that identifies the receiver unit to a plurality of end viewers served by the receiver unit;
 - requesting that at least one of the end viewers associate the unique ID with the geographic area associated with the end viewer;
 - receiving the association between the unique ID and the geographic area associated with the end viewer from the end viewer; and
 - updating the database.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 21, wherein the geographic areas are identified by zip codes.
3. (Cancelled) The method of Claim 1, wherein providing the unique ID to the end viewers, comprises:
 - displaying the unique ID to the end viewers.

4. (Cancelled) The method of Claim 1, wherein requesting that at least one of the end viewers associate the unique ID with the geographic area associated with the end viewer, comprises:

requesting that the at least one end viewer associate the unique ID with the geographic area associated with the end viewer by providing information via a communications means selected from the group consisting of:

a web site, telephone, mail and e-mail.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 21, further comprising:
~~using the database,~~ displaying a map that identifies the at least one geographic areas associated served by the with each receiver unit having the particular ID.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 21, further comprising:
using the at least one geographic areas area served by the receiver unit having the particular ~~associated with the unique ID in the database~~ to identify demographic information associated with the at least one geographic areas area served by the receiver unit; and

associating the demographic information with the unique receiver unit having the particular ~~ID for the receiver unit in the database~~.

7. (Cancelled) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
verifying the database entry by comparing the stored association between the unique ID and the geographic area associated with the end viewer with an association between the receiver unit and an assigned geographic area; and

if the association between the unique ID and the geographic area associated with the end viewer is inconsistent with the association between the receiver unit and an assigned geographic area, then updating the database entry by storing the association between the unique ID and the assigned geographic area in the database.

8. (Cancelled) The method of Claim 7, wherein the association between the receiver unit and the assigned geographic area is obtained from an external database.

9. (Cancelled) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:
using the association in the database to provide targeted programming based on the geographic areas served by the receiver units.

10. (Currently Amended) A system for ~~maintaining~~ determining at least one geographic area served by each of an association between a plurality of receiver units and a plurality of geographic area served by the receiver units, comprising:

a central system for distributing national content to ~~[[a]]~~ the plurality of receiver units and for instructing the receiver units to generate local content, wherein the central system instructs the receiver units to generate local content that includes a unique ID associated with the receiver unit providing the local content; and

the plurality of receiver units, each receiver unit serving at least one geographic area and each receiver unit associated with a unique ID; and wherein each receiver unit generates local content that displays the unique ID associated with the receiver unit to a plurality of end viewers served by the receiver unit;

wherein each of a subset of the end viewers served by the receiver units communicate the unique ID that was displayed and the geographic area where the unique ID was displayed to the central system and the central system determines at least one geographic areas served by each of the receiver units by associating the unique ID for each receiver unit with the geographic areas identified in the communications from the subset of the end viewers having the same unique ID.

~~a central database for maintaining an association between the unique IDs for the receiver units and the geographic areas served by each of the receiver units, wherein the central database is updated by:~~

~~the central system instructing the receiver units to generate local content that includes displaying the unique ID associated with the receiver unit;~~

~~each receiver unit displaying its unique ID to at least one end viewer and requesting that the at least one end viewer associate the unique ID with the geographic area associated with the end viewer; and~~

~~updating the database with the association between the unique ID and the geographic area associated with the end viewer.~~

11. (Cancelled) The system of Claim 10, wherein each receiver unit maintains an association between the receiver unit and the geographic areas it serves.

12. (Cancelled) The system of Claim 11, wherein the database updates the association maintained at the receiver units.

13. (Cancelled) The system of Claim 10, further comprising:
a display device that uses a graphical interface to display the association between the receiver units and the geographic areas served.

14. (Original) The system of Claim 10, wherein each receiver unit delivers targeted programming to the end viewers it serves based on the geographic areas served by the receiver unit.

15. (Cancelled) A method for maintaining an association between a distribution device and a plurality of end user characteristics associated with a plurality of end users served by the distribution device, comprising:

at installation of the distribution device, determining the end user characteristics associated with the end users served by the distribution device;
providing a database entry that associates the end user characteristics with a unique ID that identifies the distribution device; and
subsequent to installation, updating the database by:

providing the unique ID that identifies the distribution device to a plurality of end users served by the distribution device;
requesting that at least one of the end users associate the unique ID with the end user characteristic associated with the end viewer;
receiving the association between the unique ID and the end viewer characteristic associated with the end viewer from the end viewer; and
updating the database.

16. (Cancelled) The method of Claim 15, wherein updating the database further comprises:

requesting that a technician determine the association between the distribution device and the end viewer characteristics for the end viewers served by the distribution device;
receiving the association distribution device and the end viewer characteristics for the end viewers served by the distribution device from the technician; and
updating the database.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 15~~Claim 27, wherein the end user characteristic corresponds to end user location.

18. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~Claim 15~~Claim 27, further comprising:

~~using the association in the database to provide~~ providing targeted programming ~~to the end users served by the distribution device based on the at least one end user characteristics characteristic. of the end users served by the receiver units.~~

19. (Cancelled) The method of Claim 15, wherein updating the database further comprises:

in response to receiving the association between the unique ID and the end viewer characteristic associated with the end viewer from the end viewer, determining that the end viewer is eligible for a prize.

20. (Cancelled) A method for maintaining an association between a receiver unit and a plurality of geographic areas served by the receiver unit, comprising:

at installation of the receiver unit, providing a unique ID that identifies the receiver unit and determining the geographic areas served by the receiver unit;

creating a database entry that associates the geographic areas served by the receiver unit with the unique ID that identifies the receiver unit; and

subsequent to installation, updating the database by:

instructing the receiver unit to provide the unique ID that identifies the receiver unit to a plurality of end users served by the receiver unit;

providing, by the receiver unit, the unique ID that identifies the receiver unit to the plurality of end users served by the receiver unit;

requesting, by the receiver unit, that at least one of the end viewers associate the unique ID with a geographic area associated with the end viewer;

receiving the association between the unique ID and the geographic area associated with the end viewer from the end viewer; and

updating the database.

21. (New) A method for obtaining information to determine at least one geographic area served by each of a plurality of receiver units, comprising:

providing a unique ID for each of the receiver units;

by each receiver unit:

displaying the unique ID that identifies the receiver unit to a plurality of end viewers served by the receiver unit so that the ID is displayed on a television to each of the end viewers;

for each of at least a subset of the end viewers served by the receiver units:

requesting that each end viewer communicate information including the ID displayed to the end viewer and the geographic area where the ID was displayed to a central system;

at the central system:

receiving the information from the subset of the end viewers; and

based on the received information that includes a particular ID, identifying at least one geographic area served by the receiver unit having the particular ID.

22. (New) The method of Claim 21, wherein requesting that each end viewer communicate information, comprises:

requesting that each end viewer provide the information via a communications means selected from the group consisting of: a web site, telephone, mail and e-mail.

23. (New) The method of Claim 21, further comprising:

providing targeted programming to the end viewers served by the receiver unit having the particular ID based on the at least one geographic area served by the receiver unit.

24. (New) The system of Claim 10 further comprising a central database having an entry for each receiver unit that associates the at least one geographic area served by the receiver unit with the unique ID for the receiver unit.

25. (New) The system of Claim 10, wherein each receiver unit stores information on the at least one geographic area served by that receiver unit.

26. (New) The system of Claim 24 wherein the information stored in the central database for a selected receiver unit is communicated to the selected receiver unit.

27. (New) A method for determining at least one end user characteristic associated with a plurality of end users served by a distribution device, comprising:

providing a unique ID for the distribution device;

causing the distribution device to communicate the unique ID to the end users served by the distribution device;

causing each end user within a subset of the end users to communicate information including the unique ID that was communicated to the end user and at least one end user characteristic which characterizes the end user to a central system; and

determining that the distribution device serves end users having the end user characteristics communicated with the unique ID.

28. (New) The method of Claim 27 wherein causing each end user within a subset of the end users to communicate information comprises offering an incentive for the end users to communicate the information.